

FACT SHEET
STATE MEDICAL EDUCATION BOARD OF GEORGIA
1718 Peachtree Street, NW, Suite 683, Atlanta, Georgia 30309-2496, 404/206-5420

Program 1

Country Doctor Scholarship Program

- ❖ Provides up to \$20,000 per year in tuition support for Georgia students attending medical school in the U.S.
- ❖ Students are required to practice in a Georgia county of 35,000 or fewer people after completion of their medical education.
- ❖ One year of service is required for each year of tuition support, which typically equates to a four-year commitment.
- ❖ During FY 2004, 37 scholarships were funded. During FY 2005, it is anticipated that 37 scholarships will be funded.
- ❖ During FY 2003, 28 scholarship recipients began practice in a rural area. To date, 21 physicians have indicated they will begin rural practice in Georgia during FY 2004.
- ❖ A total of 1,590 medical students have participated in the Program since 1952.
- ❖ More than 600 “alumni” are still practicing medicine in rural communities in Georgia; many others remain in other areas of Georgia.

Georgia Medical Fair

- ❖ Established in 1979 to provide a low cost, effective way for rural communities to recruit physicians.
- ❖ Model program that has been replicated by many other states.
- ❖ Typical participation is 20-25 rural communities and 80-100 physicians.
- ❖ Over 400 physicians have been recruited to rural Georgia with the help of the Medical Fair. This function is key to physician retention, allowing a well-informed choice of practice location by establishing direct and continuing first-hand contact with a variety of potential practice opportunities.
- ❖ Rural Georgia communities and hospitals realize significant economy through person-to-person access to an average of 100 physicians in training throughout their post graduate medical training.
- ❖ Communities are able to realistically place themselves in the current healthcare market in Georgia through interaction with other rural communities and physicians in training.

Program 2

Physicians for Rural Areas Assistance Program

- ❖ Offers up to \$25,000 per year in repayment of student loan debt for physicians who agree to practice in a rural, medically underserved community in Georgia. This program is comprised of state dollars only.
- ❖ To be eligible, the physician must agree to practice in a county with a population of 35,000 or less, according to the U.S. Census Count of 2000.
- ❖ Service may be performed in for-profit situations. Recipients of the State Medical Education Board Scholarship are eligible to participate with extended service commitment.
- ❖ Minimum commitment is one year and the maximum is four years (permitting a loan amount of up to \$100,000 maximum).
- ❖ Applications are prioritized based on physician specialty and the severity of need, with first priority given to physicians who practice in greatest areas of need.

Georgia Loan Repayment Program

- ❖ Offers up to \$25,000 per year in repayment of student loan debt for physicians who agree to practice in a rural, medically underserved community in Georgia. This program is comprised of state and federal dollars.
- ❖ To be eligible, the physician must agree to practice in a county with a population of 35,000 or less that is also designated as a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) by the federal government. Approximately 30 qualifying counties are targeted each year.
- ❖ Federal regulation requires that service be performed in not-for-profit situations.
- ❖ Minimum commitment is two years and the maximum is four years (permitting a total loan repayment amount of up to \$100,000 maximum).
- ❖ Applications are prioritized based on the severity of need, with first priority given to physicians who agree to practice in greatest areas of need.
- ❖ Since the inception of the Loan Repayment Program, 132 contracts have been awarded.